(c) whether it is a fact that the labour on salt plants will be rendered jobless due to the new Government's policy on salt manufacturing;

(d) whether it is a fact that unhappy labour have demonstrated at the office of Inspector Salt at Bhainder in Thane district; and

(e) whether Government will permit continuance of operations, through the **traditional salt pan labour?**

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) The total quantum of salt produced in the district of Thane in Maharashtra is about 1.7 lakh tonnes per year.

(b) The number of people employed in salt industry in the district of Thane is reported to be about 3000.

(c) No, sir. The policy of banning sale of non-iodised salt for edible purpose will **not render salt labourers jobless.**

(d) Yes, Sir. The salt labourers of Mira-Bhayander area in the district of Thane demonstrated opposing the nation wide ban on sale of non-iodised salt for edible purpose;

(e) Yes, Sir.

Recommendations of Abid Hussain Committee

1256. SHRI S. PETER ALPHONSE:
SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on the recommendation of the Abid Hussain Committee, the S.S.I. exemption limit was raised to rupees three crores some time last year end;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Hon'ble Prime Minister in one of his recent statements mentioned that the above limit will be reduced to rupees one crore;

(c) if so, is it not against the developmental aspects of S.S.I. Units, especially when the environmental regulations are strictly to be followed resulting in investment cost increase; and

(d) the action taken to restore the limit of rupees three crores?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) Perhaps the intention of the question is to seek information on SSI investment ceiling and not on SSI exemption limit. Abid Hussain Committee had recommended raising investment limit for SSI to Rs. 3 crores; based upon which the investment ceiling for SSI was raised to Rs. 3 crores in December, 97.

(b) Hon'ble Prime Minister had announced in a seminar on 29.4.98 that the investment limit for small scale industries will be reduced from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 1 crore.

(c) No, Sir. The Industry Representatives have been pressing for lowering the investment limit for SSI from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 1 crore with the apprehension that major portion of institutional credit will be cornered by bigger small units. Pollution Control and Research and Development equipments are not included in the list of plant and machinery for the purpose of computing value of plant and machinery to determine whether the investment of a unit falls below the limit prescribed for small scale industry.

(d) The investment limit of Rs. 3 crores has not been changed so far. However, action to reduce the same from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 1 crore is being initiated.

प्रशुल्क आयोग

1257. **श्री ईश दत्त यादव:** क्या उद्योग मंत्री यह बताने की कपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार ने प्रशुल्क आयोग को वाणिज्य मंत्रालय के अन्तर्गत लाने के लिए कोई नीतिगत निर्णय लिया है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो ऐसे कौन से कारण थे जिनकी वजह से सरकार को ऐसा निर्णय लेना पड़ा और इस निर्णय का उनके मंत्रालय पर क्या प्रभाव पड़ेगा?

उद्योग मंत्री (श्री सिकन्दर बख्त): (क) जी, नहीं।

(ख) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

बिहार में प्रधान मंत्री रोजगार योजना के अन्तर्गत प्राप्त आवेदन-पत्र

1258. **श्री ईश दत्त यादव:** क्या उद्योग मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) वर्ष 1996-97 में बिहार राज्य में प्रधान मंत्री रोजगार योजना के अंतर्गत शिक्षित बेरोजगार युवकों से 1996-97 के दौरान स्व-रोजगार हेतु कितने आवेदन-पत्र प्राप्त हुए और कितने आवेदन-पत्र स्वीकृत किए गए;

(ख) क्या इस योजना के अन्तर्गत ऋण स्वीकृत किए जाने के मामले में शहरी और ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों के बीच भेदभाव किया जा रहा है;

(ग) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;

(घ) गत वर्ष के दौरान इस योजना के अन्तर्गत बिहार के लिए अधिकतम कितनी ऋण-राशि स्वीकृत की गई; और

(ङ) वर्ष 1998-99 में कितनी ऋण-राशि स्वीकृत करने का लक्ष्य रखा गया है?

उद्योग मंत्री (श्री सिकन्दर बख्त): (क) राज्य सरकार से प्राप्त रिपोर्टों के अनुसार प्रधान मंत्री रोजगार योजना के अन्तर्गत शिक्षित बेरोजगार युवकों से स्व-रोजगार के लिए जिला उद्योग केन्द्रों में 58,714 आवेदन प्राप्त हुये थे तथा वर्ष 1996-97 के दौरान बिहार राज्य में बैंकों द्वारा 18,818 आवेदन स्वीकृत किये गये थे।

(ख) और (ग) ग्रामीण तथा शहरी क्षेत्रों के बीच ऋण आवेदनों को स्वीकृत करने में बैंकों द्वारा दर्शाए गए भेद-भाव के बारे में कोई रिपोर्ट नहीं है, जैसा कि भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक ने सूचित किया है।

(घ) बिहार राज्य सरकार से प्राप्त रिपोर्टों के अनुसार 1997-98 के दौरान राज्य में स्वीकृत किया गया औसत ऋण लगभग 80,000/- रु० है। इस योजना के अन्तर्गत 1 लाख रु० तक की लागत वाली परियोजना आती है।

(ङ) वर्ष 1998-99 के लिये बिहार का प्रस्तावित लक्ष्य 20,500 लाभार्थी हैं।

Growth Centre in Assam

1259. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of growth centre, to be set up in Assam;

(b) the amount allocated and location finalised; and

(c) the progress of work?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) to (c) Three Growth Centres have been allotted to the State of Assam. Of these, two Growth Centres i.e. Chariduar (district Sonitput) and Matia (district Goalpara) were approved in 1997. The State Government is yet to submit a project report in respect of the third Growth Centre where a change in site for the Growth Centre is contemplated by the State Government.

The progress made in respect of the approved growth centres upto 31st March, 1998, is as under:—

(Rs. in lakhs)

Name of growth centre	Central releases	State release	Total Expenditure
Chariduar	50.00	05.00	17.00
Matia	50.00	Nil	15.00

Loans to SC/ST under PMRY

1260. SHRI MOHINDAR SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) how many persons belonging to SC/ST community have been provided with loans under the PM Rojgar Yojana; and

(b) how many persons belonging to SC/ST community doing the work of scavengers have been rehabilitated during the current financial year?